The fee rate has been linked to the wholesale price index of a year to be determined on yearly basis.

Conversion of buses into CNG for Schools for Handicapped

†2089. DR. A. K. PATEL: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Delhi has not made any provision in their Budget for 2001-2002 for conversion of the buses into CNG for the schools for the handicapped;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the schools for the handicapped are being closed down as a result thereof; and

(c) if so, what directions the Central Government propose to give to State Government to tackle the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B. C. KHANDURI]: (a) to (c) Conversion of school buses for the handicapped into CNG is the subject-matter of the Government of Delhi. The Central Government does not come into picture.

Annuity scheme for construction of Highways

2090. SHRI R. P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that annuity scheme has been adopted for construction of highways under which contracts are handed out to construct and maintain highways and Government make annual payments to the company over 10 to 15 years;

(b) in what ways it is preferred over the toll system and whether it is viable to sustain the highway development programme especially in the light of international experience; and

(c) whether it is a fact that Indian companies cannot bid except through joint ventures with foreign firms and whether presently only Malaysian companies have been chosen for these projects?

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B. C. KHANDURI]: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Advantage of annuity system over toll based Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) projects is that Government makes deferred payments over a long period. The projects include maintenance and the Government has the right to collect user fees to earn revenue. The sustainability of such projects cannot be viewed in isolation but needs to be seen as complementing other options like budgetary funding, Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), BOT etc. A mix of options is being followed.

(c) No, Sir.

National Highways Development Project

2091. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of stretches of the National Highways Development Project for which the contracts have been awa. 'ed so far;

(b) the length of each stretch and estimated amount;

(c) the amount at which contract for a stretch is awarded and what are the conditions the contractor has to observe; and

(d) out of the companies which have been awarded contracts, how many are Indian companies, foreign companies and joint ventures?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B. C. KHANDURI]: (a) and (b) So far 99 contracts have been awarded for National Highways Development Project and other projects for a